

BRIEFS

GAINES APPOINTS COMM. ON COMM.

PHOENIX (BP) — Appointments to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Committee on Committees have been announced by SBC President Steve Gaines, pastor of Memphis-area Bellevue Church in Cordova, Tn. The Committee on Committees will assemble in Phoenix prior to the SBC's June 13-14 annual meeting to nominate members of the Committee on Nominations who, in 2018, will nominate trustees for the boards of SBC entities. The Committee on Committees has 68 members, two from each of the qualified 34 states and regions. Gaines named Randy Davis, president & executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board in Brentwood, to serve as chairman. Mississippi Baptists appointed by Gaines to the committee are Don Boone, senior pastor of First Church, Vancleave, and Tim Mims, pastor of First Church, Winona.

LAWSUIT ACCUSES TEXAS BAPT. HOME

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — A seven-million-dollar lawsuit alleges children were "sexually sexually abused" and neglected at the Texas Baptist Home for Children (TBHC), an affiliated ministry of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention (SBTC) in Dallas. The suit claims seven siblings under age 14 suffered sexual and physical abuse as well as "serious medical and other neglect" in 2013 while under the care of foster parents at cottages owned by TBHC in Waxahachie. Among the suit's allegations are that TBHC failed to properly investigate reports of abuse, perform adequate background checks or follow-ups on foster parents, and take prompt action against perpetrators. Attorney Hal Browne told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram three of the male siblings were sexually abused by "other, older children," while the four additional siblings suffered neglect. SBTC has not directly responded to the allegations.



BABY BOOM — The growing birth rate among Muslims will put the group's population at nearly equal that of Christians globally by 2060, according to Pew Research. In this file photo, Muslims are praying at Jakarta's Masjid Istiqbal, the largest mosque in Southeast Asia. (BP photo)

Muslims overtaking Christians

Pew: Two groups will be nearly equal by 2060

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — Muslims are so outpacing Christians in births that the two population groups will be nearly equal by 2060, with Christians holding only a slight majority, according to

newly-released Pew Research Center data.

An increase in Muslim births, compounded by an aging Christian population, will put the Muslim share of the global population at 31% by 2060 while

Christians will make up just under 32% percent, Pew said in its April 5 report.

Muslim births are nearly double the overall growth rate of the global population, Pew said, characterizing Islam as the youngest major religious group with the highest fertility. Atheists, agnostics, and adults who don't specify a religion, together

see PEW on p. 6

Is Planned Parenthood funding on the ropes?

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — U.S. President Donald Trump signed legislation April 13 that once again enables states to withhold federal family planning funds from abortion providers like Planned Parenthood, the nation's most prolific abortion provider and recipient of more than \$500 million annually in taxpayer support.

Trump's action overturned a rule issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in December, only five weeks before U.S. President Obama left office. Many pro-life advocates perceived the HHS regulation, which effectively barred states from prohibiting Title X funds for abortion clinics, as a parting gift from Obama to the abortion industry.

The HHS rule appeared particularly beneficial to the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA). In recent years, at least 12 states have cut money for Planned Parenthood, some in the wake of various scandals uncovered regarding the country's No. 1 abortion provider.

Courts blocked those actions in some cases, thereby

see FUNDING on p. 7



BENTLEY

Baptist Ala. governor pleads guilty, resigns

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP and local reports) — After Robert Bentley, Alabama's Southern Baptist governor, pleaded guilty to campaign finance violations and resigned amid allegations of illegal conduct to cover up an extramarital affair, the state's Baptist leaders expressed disappointment and pledged prayer.

"More than anything, we need to pray for Gov. Bentley," Alabama Baptist Convention President John Thweatt, pastor of First Church in Pell City, told Baptist Press (BP). "Pray for his family. Pray for our new gover-

nor, lifting her up and asking God to give her direction and give her wisdom."

Within an hour of Bentley's resignation, Lt. Governor Kay Ivey, a Republican and member of First Church in Montgomery, was sworn in with her pastor Jay Wolf holding the Bible on which she placed her hand. Wolf led the swearing-in ceremony's opening prayer.

Bentley, a Republican and former chairman of deacons at First Church in Tuscaloosa, pleaded guilty April 10

see ALABAMA on p. 6

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

The best way

There are abundant reasons for doing the right thing. There are the obvious reasons, such as legal sanctions like prison time and civil judgments. There are health reasons, such as the avoidance of lethal diseases resulting from immoral activities. Most importantly, there are eternal reasons as expressed throughout the Bible.

Yet mankind seems determined to try the wrong way with all its attendant consequences. Why do we make bad decisions that we already know will make life so much more complicated and difficult, when the best way is clearly laid out for us to follow?

Thomas and Nancy Beattie were "married" in 2003. The word, "married," in the previous sentence is wrapped in quotation marks because of the unusual nature of their union. Thomas and Nancy are both women, biologically speaking. In our ever more perverse American culture of today, that's legal and not unusual. However, Thomas and Nancy decided to add another, rather extraordinary twist to their relationship.

Thomas underwent extensive hormonal therapy and sex reassignment surgery to remake herself male, complete with the external physical attributes of a man. Again, even this decision is not all that unusual in our mixed-up culture. However, she (he?) demanded that her (his?) internal and external female sex organs remain intact and in place, so she (he?) could bear children during the "marriage" to Nancy.

The process by which a woman and a converted, part male/part female person conceived children is not something that can be comfortably published in a family newspaper like The Baptist Record, but they managed to bring forth three physically normal children after an initial miscarriage.

Thomas and Nancy turned into overnight news media darlings, with Thomas hailed as the first man to ever give birth and a harbinger of the future of family relations. On her widely syndicated television show, Oprah pushed support for the couple as she touched Thomas' protruding belly. Thomas even wrote a

memoir of her (his?) pregnancy entitled, *Labor of Love*.

That was then. Thomas and Nancy divorced in 2015. Family Court Judge Douglas Gerlach, assigned to the case, was a tad bit confused about the circumstances. Were Thomas and Nancy legally "married" in Arizona where they were living but which didn't recognize same sex marriages in 2003? The couple said yes, because Thomas is a man now and Nancy has always been a woman and they got married in Hawaii, which recognized same sex marriages at the time.

What about the female reproductive organs that Thomas kept, although she (he?) wanted to be a man in all other ways? What determines who is legally a man, or legally a woman? The status of the children was equally unclear. Although Thomas is raising the children as a single parent, which parent is she (he?)? The children reportedly call him "Daddy," but isn't she (he?) really their mother, both legally and biologically?

Such is the state of our culture today. As we hurtle toward the social approval and legalization of everything (polygamy, pedophilia, bestiality, and narcotics, for examples), questions like the ones raised in the Beattie "marriage" and divorce will seem tame.

Wouldn't it be better for us if we simply conducted ourselves as God teaches us in His Holy Word? Wouldn't it be better to respect God's established definition of marriage, than to devise our own ever-changing versions? Wouldn't it be better to bring children into the world and raise them under God's social and spiritual plans for both parents and children?

Wouldn't it be better if Christians lived by the Bible, rather than allowing secular courts and legislative bodies to define the things upon which we apparently cannot agree? Wouldn't it be better if we each had the backbone to stand on the Word alone, without wavering before the eyes of the world?

As we have learned to the detriment of our cause, talk is cheap. Let's get started doing the right thing in the time we have left before Jesus returns.

To lead, prepare

A key leadership responsibility is preparing for the future. That's a difficult task considering the chaotic and rapidly-changing time in which we live. Still, there are some things that we know and for which we can prepare.

■ **First**, when tomorrow comes we will not be exempt from the principalities and powers who are working to destroy human life created in God's image. As perplexing as the manifestation of evil is, the Bible shows us that our enemy works at every level of society.

How do we understand the increasing coarseness of our political life, the growing vulgarity in public life, even the division and compromise that threaten our church life, without knowing that our enemy is working to destroy that which God loves? Whatever happens tomorrow, you must expect and prepare for spiritual opposition.

■ **Secondly**, though the powers of darkness are working to destroy us, God has put limitations on the principalities and powers. Evil exists, but God is in control and He even uses evil men to accomplish good things. We must not fall into the trap of overestimating the enemy and underestimating God.

When tomorrow comes, God will be on His throne, hearing our prayers, accomplishing His agenda, and rescuing human beings from our sin and stupidity. This is our true basis for optimism when tomorrow comes.

■ **Third**, the discipling of children is essential for a bright tomorrow. If you don't disciple your children, the world will. The principalities and powers work to distort the human mind and this begins in childhood. Preschool children develop ideas about the world and the "powers" work to conform the minds and hearts of our kids to the world's ways. We must fight this.

Every believer, every church, must work to reach children and teach them to obey God. Whatever you do, don't forget the children who will inhabit tomorrow's world.



Guest opinion
with Randy Adams

■ **Fourth**, the American church is returning to what has been the norm for Christians throughout the centuries: a pilgrim people, out of step with society, often poor, and sometimes persecuted. The American church has escaped the norm for much of our history, but that is changing. We need to prepare for this.

Most of the world's believers are already poor and persecuted. There are more Christians in Africa than in Europe and the United States combined, and they are mostly poor. China has about the same number of weekly worshippers as the USA does, and they are persecuted.

I'm not saying the American church will experience what the Asian church does today, but a bright tomorrow requires that we put our hope in God and not in the American political process. Not that we should abandon political participation, but spiritual work is done on our knees before an open Bible.

God's Word tells us that the day will come when time will be no more. On that day the curse will be removed and the daylight will vanquish the night forever (Revelation 22:3-5). Until that day, with every tomorrow the Lord gives, fix your eyes on Jesus and join Him in the spiritual battle for souls.

Adams is executive director of the Northwest Baptist Convention in Vancouver, Wa. He is online at randyadams.org. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style.

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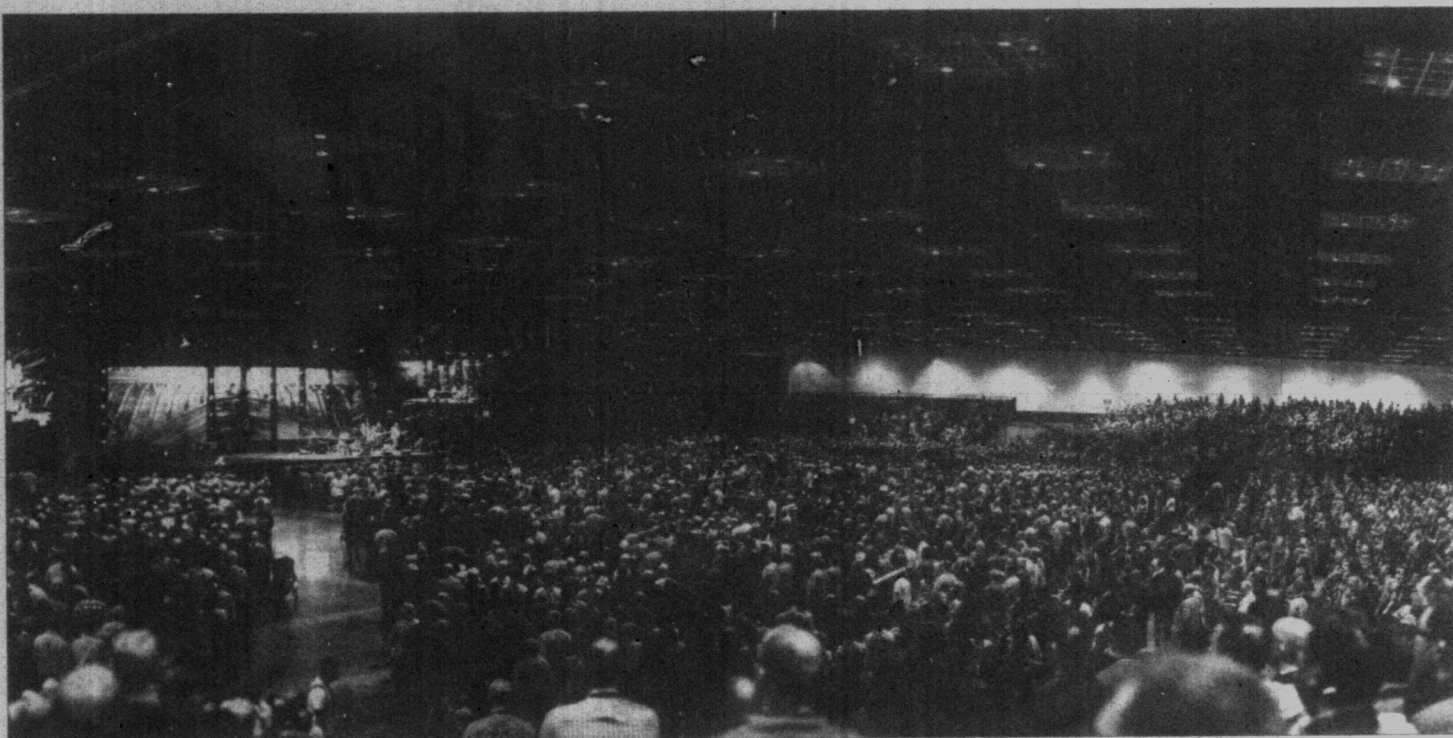
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STANDING ROOM ONLY — Southern Baptists were among some 8,400 people who gathered April 3-5 in Indianapolis for The Gospel Coalition National Conference. (BP photo courtesy of The Gospel Coalition)

Southern Baptists attend The Gospel Coalition Conference celebrates Protestant Reformation's 500th anniversary

INDIANAPOLIS (BP and local reports) — Some 8,500 people, including a significant contingent of Southern Baptists, celebrated the Protestant Reformation's 500th anniversary at The Gospel Coalition (TGC) National Conference April 3-5 in Indianapolis.

Five centuries after Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses to a church door in Wittenberg, Germany, in 1517, the meeting featured sermons on each chapter of the biblical book of Galatians as well as historical addresses on key Reformation figures.

More than a dozen conference workshops also explored Reformation themes, including the movement's missionary legacy and why Reformation leaders weren't more united.

Martin Luther, a Roman Catholic priest, monk, and leader of the Protestant Reformation, was instrumental in, among other actions, dismantling the Roman Catholic Church's entrenched system of granting money indulgences for the forgiveness of sins.

Luther was excommunicated by Pope Leo 10th in 1520 and declared an outlaw

by the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

About a quarter of the Indianapolis meeting's 70 plenary session and workshop speakers had ties to Southern Baptist churches or Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) entities. Seven SBC entities were among conference exhibitors.

The TGC website describes the organization as "a broadly Reformed network of churches," founded by New Testament scholar D.A. Carson and New York pastor Tim Keller.

The group seeks to unite believers "across denominational, ethnic, and class lines," according to the website.

Daniel Akin, a TGC Council member and president of Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., called the conference "encouraging and fruitful."

"It is encouraging to see evangelicals come together around biblical fidelity, expositional preaching, and Gospel centeredness," Akin told Baptist Press (BP) in written comments. "Southern Baptists have been very involved this week, from interactive exhibits and personal contact to mul-

"It is encouraging to see evangelicals come together around biblical fidelity, expositional preaching, and Gospel centeredness ... I have personally been blessed and glad to participate with thousands of people coming together to honor our Lord."

Daniel Akin

TGC Council member and president of Southeastern Seminary

multiple workshops, and culminating with a powerful message from pastor Thabiti Anyabwile on the last morning.

"I have personally been blessed and glad to participate with thousands of people coming together to honor our Lord."

Anyabwile, pastor of Anacostia River Church in Washington, D.C., delivered a plenary address on Galatians 5. Preaching about freedom in

Christ, Anyabwile said, "God's will for your life is that you use your freedom to serve others," according to The Gospel Coalition Twitter feed.

Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville, participated in a plenary session panel discussion on racial reconciliation and introduced an address by U.S. Sen. Ben Sasse (R-Ne.).

The ERLC hosted an April 3 pre-conference at the Indianapolis meeting entitled, Gospel Courage in a Complex Culture, with 900 people in attendance.

SBC entity leaders to speak at TGC workshops included Akin; Moore; R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.; and Zane Pratt, vice president for global training at the International Mission Board in Richmond, Va.

Among Southern Baptist pastors to address TGC workshops were Matt Carter of Austin Stone Community Church in Austin, Texas; Andy Davis of First Church in Durham, N.C.; and Juan Sanchez of High Pointe Church in Austin, Texas.

Kentucky Baptist Convention associate executive director for convention relations Curtis Woods was among workshop speakers, as were

professors and staff members from Southeastern, Southern, and Midwestern seminaries, and LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, which operated the conference's 15,000-square-foot bookstore.

Southern and Midwestern seminaries offered courses for seminary credit at the conference, according to TGC's website.

SBC entities represented in the exhibit hall included ERLC, LifeWay, Southeastern Seminary, Southern Seminary, Midwestern Seminary, New Orleans Seminary and Southwestern Seminary.

The New Orleans Seminary exhibit featured Reformation-themed items from the seminary's Museum of the Bible and Archaeology, including two pamphlets by Martin Luther.

Kyle Walker, Southwestern Seminary's vice president for student services, told BP the conference is an occasion for evangelicals of all stripes to unite around the Gospel — even those who do not fall under TGC's "broadly Reformed" banner.

"TGC was a great opportunity for us to connect with prospective students, alumni, and fellow partners in the Gospel," Walker said in written comments. "Amid our theological distinctions runs a shared commitment to the advancement of the Gospel."

The primacy of Jesus stands at the center of all that is Christianity. Jesus has no superior. He has no equal. He has no substitute. He is not just another religious leader in a parade of influencers. He is the Savior, the Lord, and not just any savior. Listen to the words from Scripture that point to this high position. John opens his gospel by telling us, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:1-3).

What an incredible statement of truth about Jesus.

The Apostle Paul adds his insight, as led by the Spirit of God, and tells us in his writings to the church at Colossae, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence" (Colossians 1:14-18).

What an incredible word of the glory of Christ.

In the very opening verses of Hebrews, the writer gives us his insight into Jesus. He says, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the proph-



The Primacy of Jesus

ets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Jesus is Lord.

In our day and time, we need to make sure our presentation and understanding of Him remains central. Whether we are preaching, teaching, singing, or sharing, He remains at the center of what we do and who we are. If you're preaching, the message, regardless of what the particular subject might be, is ultimately about Jesus. If you happen to be teaching, it's not just a clever grouping of insights that you have put together but a presentation of

the glorious truths of God who revealed Himself in His Son, Jesus. If you are singing, the music is not about gifted writers or composers or even about the singers with their beautiful voices, but above all about Jesus. If you are simply sharing a testimony with someone, you can witness to that person but your testimony is not about you. It is about the Jesus you have come to know.

The Bible declares that He is the Alpha and the Omega. In our modern alphabet, that means He is the A and the Z - the beginning and the end. In fact, He is A to Z and everything in between. Whatever particular subject about which you are singing, sharing, preaching, or teaching, make sure Jesus is the Ultimate Subject because what you're doing will always have an unmistakable connection to Him. Just think about the letters of the alphabet and come to understand how He fits in every one:

Angels
Bible
Commitment
Devil
Eternity
Faith
God
Heaven
Incarnation
Judgement
Knowledge
Love
Miracles
Nazareth
Obedience
Prophecy
Quietness
Resurrection
Security
Tithing
Unforgiveness
Victory
World
Xerxes
Youth
Zacchaeus

The Bible speaks of all these things, but none over and above Jesus. Everything centers in and flows from Him. No wonder the Apostle Paul could write with such eloquence and beauty in Philippians 2:9-11, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Amen.

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

Revivals & Homecomings

- **Salem Church, Scott Association**, will host a revival on April 30-May 3. Sunday, 11:55 a.m. and 6 p.m. Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m. Don Savell, speaker. Larry Duncan, pastor.
- **Lorena Church, Forest**, will host revival services April 23-26, at 7 p.m. nightly. Bubba Hollifield, guest speaker.
- **Salem Church, Kemper Association**, will hold Homecoming on May 7, beginning with

singing at 10:45 a.m. Worship service to follow. Dinner on the grounds after worship service. Jessie Napp, pastor.

► **Green's Creek Church, Petal**, will host a revival on May 7 - 10. Sun., 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m. Norris Ables, speaker. Kenny Keeton, music. Mike Ronton, pastor.

► **Red Banks Church, Red Banks**, will hold their 169th Homecoming on April 30, beginning at 10:30 a.m. Special music by The Masters with message by Pastor Jonathan Childress. For more information, call (662) 274-3044.

Truth is not relative.

Find it in the One who is the way, truth, and life.

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life.

From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God; even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

BIBL i O C i P H E R

ISLZZLK HYL FL, DOLU TLU ZOHSS

OHAL FVB, HUK DOLU AOL F ZOHSS

ZLWHYHAL FVB MYVT AOLPY

JVTWHUF, HUK ZOHSS YLWYVHJO

FVB, HUK JHZA VBA FVBY UHTL HZ

LCPS, MVY AOL ZVU VM THU'Z ZHRL.

SBRL ZPE: ADLUAF-ADV

Clue: J = C

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark Nine: Thirty-Seven

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

April 20, 2017

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.



Go to our web site, www.missionsnow.net
choose "Churches" and click on
"Adopt a Missionary" to complete the form on-line.

MBASYC&O CONCERT TOUR DATES

LOCATION CHANGE

*Wednesday, June 14, 2017
First Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m.
200 E. Monticello St.
Brookhaven, MS 39476
(601) 788-9607

Thursday, June 15, 2017
First Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m.
300 N Cleveland Ave.
Long Beach, MS 39560
(228) 864-2584

Friday, June 16, 2017
First Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m.
1108 Robb St.
Summit, MS 39666
(601) 248-6268

Saturday, June 17, 2017
Highland Colony Baptist Church, 6:00 p.m.
1200 Highland Colony Pkwy.
Ridgeland, MS 39157
(601) 856-4031

Sunday, June 18, 2017
First Baptist Church, 11:00 a.m.
402 N Van Buren St.
Carthage, MS 39051
(601) 267-4583

First Baptist Church, 6:00 p.m.
303 1st Ave.
Amory, MS 38821
(662) 256-7131

Monday, June 19, 2017
First Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m.
431 North State St.
Jackson, MS 39201
(601) 949-1900



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Our students need your daily prayers as they serve. Ask them to let you know their specific requests. You could consider making them a focus of VBS at your church.

PROVIDE

There are small things they may need while on the field that you could include in a care package. Walmart gift cards are great. Notes of encouragement throughout the summer would also be much appreciated.

INVITE

You may want to invite your adopted missionary to speak to your church after the summer. Ask them to include your church on their e-mail updates throughout the summer so that you can hear their ministry stories and prayer requests while they are on the field.

Go to our Web site, www.missionsnow.net
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Pray this day for...

April 21 - May 4, 2017

"praying at all times in the Spirit... To that end keep alert with perseverance, making supplication for all the saints..."

Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)

Pray for: **Karen Brown**, missionary ministering to American Peoples through nursing.

Pray for: **Matthew Burke**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through general evangelism.

Pray for: **Rebekah Clark**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through youth evangelism.

Pray for: **Cindy DeMars**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Guy DeMars**, missionary ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through hospitality coordination.

Pray for: **David & Laurie Bledsoe**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Kaye Brooks**, missionary ministering to American Peoples through church planting.

Pray for: **Thomas & Kerri Dewett**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Aaron & Tiffany Epps**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Sheila Flowers**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through administration.

Pray for: **Clarence Frank & Phoebe Harrison**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples.

Pray for: **Kenneth & Kimberly Hathcock**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Earl & Ramona Hewitt**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through medicine, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Cynthia Hodgins**, missionary ministering to Deaf Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

WMU/WM

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2017 Senior Adult Day Retreats

Sr. Day Retreat I May 16, 2017

12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Emmanuel Baptist Church
Grenada, MS

Sr. Day Retreat II May 18, 2017

12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

West Ellisville Baptist Church
Ellisville, MS

Sr. Day Retreat III May 23, 2017

12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Meadow Grove Baptist Church
Brandon, MS

Discipleship/Family Ministry

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HOUSE TOPS

College News



Anna McDaniel (center) was crowned Miss **WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY** on Jan. 20. Pictured with her are Emma Rogers, first alternate (left) and Hattie Zukas, second alternate.



WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY inducted five alumni into the Hall of Fame during the annual awards dinner March 31. Pictured (from left) are Scott Hummel, WCU provost; Ron Herrod, class of 1965; Victor Maridueña, class of 1967; Larry Harrington, class of 2006; Debra Owens Mercer, classes of 1974 and 1979; Matt Olson, class of 2008, recipient of the Distinguished Young Alumnus Award; Pam Shearer, director of alumni relations.



MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE dedicated its disc golf course Mar. 30. A grant from Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation made the course possible. Shown are MC leaders joining Clinton officials during the ribbon-cutting ceremony.



In other College News:

► **William Carey University** will host teacher education roundups on the school's Hattiesburg main campus on April 25 and on the Tradition campus north of Biloxi on April 27. Both events, which are for high school and college students interested in the teaching profession, are free and open to the public. To RSVP for the Hattiesburg campus event, e-mail dharris@wmcarey.edu. To RSVP for the Tradition campus event, e-mail ncochran@wmcarey.edu.

Annsley McRae, a rising senior from Tishomingo, has been elected president of the **MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE Student Government Association (SGA)**. The daughter of Kirby and Pamela McRae, she joins her older sister Mary, an MC graduate who also served as SGA president.

Bible Drills



FIRST CHURCH, MORTON, hosted their Bible drill. Shown are children's leader Sonda Johnson, Joshua Cochran, Tara Leggett, Trinity Leggett, and youth leader Miranda Leggett.



Drillers Logan Graham, Rachel Gray, and Greer Blaylock of **FIRST CHURCH, EUPORA**, are advancing to Association Bible drills.



ACKERMAN CHURCH, ACKERMAN, Bible Buddies include Sadie Kate Wood and Raynee Claire Lucas. Bible Drillers include Michelle Parker, Halea Wood, Hayes Wood, and leader for the past nine years Alison Hulet.

WESTWOOD CHURCH, MERIDIAN, Bible drillers include (back row, from left) Orlando Davis, Mackenzie Britt, Evan Grace Branstetter, Mason Coleman, Garrett Gibson, (front row, from left) Walker Swearingen, Jonathan Minchew, Erin Gibson, Reid Coleman, and Kelsey Bounds.

ALABAMA

cont. from p. 1

to converting campaign funds for personal use and failing to file a major campaign finance report, according to media reports.

He resigned shortly after the plea, stating in a farewell address, "The consequences of my mistakes have been grievously unfair to you, my dedicated staff and my cabinet." Bentley also told the staff and

cabinet, "I have let you and our people down."

The Montgomery Advertiser reported that among terms of the plea deal, Bentley will serve one year of probation, forfeit the \$36,912 in his campaign account, and perform 100 hours of community service as a dermatologist, his profession before entering politics.

Bentley's wife of 50 years divorced him in 2015 amid the allegations of his infidelity.

Travis Coleman, pastor of

First Church in Prattville, told BP, "We have reached out to Gov. Bentley, are praying for him, and are willing to help him in any way possible."

Thweatt said moral failures among politicians are "especially devastating for us when it's a person who claims to be a believer." He added Christians should condemn the former governor's sin but not become judgmental.

"There is an expectation of holiness for the child of God," Thweatt said. Because all believers

are susceptible to sin and moral failure, Thweatt said, "we've got to take steps to make sure we're walking in sanctification."

"Our only hope of overcoming the temptations of power and sex and money and all of those things is to stay close to Jesus," said Joe Godfrey, executive director of the Alabama Citizens' Action Program, the state convention's public policy auxiliary.

Three of the last six Alabama governors have either been convicted or pleaded guilty to

criminal charges. Also leaving office in Alabama during the past 18 months:

■ **Republican House Speaker Mike Hubbard**, convicted on 12 of 23 felony ethics charges. He is a United Methodist.

■ **State Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Moore**, a Republican suspended for the remainder of his term for allegedly directing probate judges to disobey a U.S. Supreme Court order related to same-sex marriage. He is a member of First Church in Gallant.

PEW

cont. from p. 1

classified as "nones" by Pew, lag far behind both Muslims and Christians in reproduction.

"Between 2015 and 2060, the world's population is expected to increase by 32%, to 9.6 billion. Over that same period, the number of Muslims... is projected to increase by 70%. The number of Christians is projected to rise by 34%, slightly faster than the global population overall yet far more slowly than Muslims."

The projections account for the fact that children sometimes change religious affiliations in adulthood, Pew pointed out.

Well before 2060 — between the years 2030 and 2035 — Muslims will give birth to 225 million babies, a million more than the 224 million anticipated by Christians. The gap is expected to grow to six million in favor of Muslims by 2055 or 2060. Pew predicts, with 232 million births among Muslims and only 226 million among Christians.

The growing Muslim birth rate is also rising rapidly because Christians comprise a

"Between 2015 and 2060, the world's population is expected to increase by 32%, to 9.6 billion. Over that same period, the number of Muslims... is projected to increase by 70%. The number of Christians is projected to rise by 34%, slightly faster than the global population overall yet far more slowly than Muslims."

Pew press release

greater share of deaths globally, Pew said.

"Indeed, in recent years, Christians have had a disproportionately large share of the world's deaths (37%), in large part because of the relatively advanced age of Christian populations in some places," Pew said. "This is especially true in Europe, where the number of deaths already is estimated to exceed the number of births among Christians."

While the relatively young Christian population of a region like sub-Saharan Africa

is projected to grow in the decades ahead, the same cannot be said for Christian populations everywhere. In Germany alone, for example, there were an estimated 1.4 million more Christian deaths than births between 2010 and 2015, a pattern that is expected to continue across much of Europe in the decades ahead.

Comparatively, "nones" comprise only 16% of the population and are expected to decline significantly because of a low birth rate. Between 2010 and 2015, "nones" gave birth to only a tenth of the world's newborns, Pew said. By 2055 to 2060, the rate will decline to nine percent.

Pew said the trend was discovered in its research for the 2015 study, "The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050," that utilizes 2,500 censuses, surveys, and population registers.

According to its web site, Pew Research Center is a "non-partisan fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping America and the world." The center is located in Washington, D.C.

The latest Pew demographic information builds on the 2015 study and is available at Pewforum.org.

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The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically

via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39208-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org

MS POSITIONS

SANDERSVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH IN SANDERSVILLE, MS IS SEEKING A FULL TIME PASTOR. Please send resumes to pat.dement1@gmail.com or 32 Davenport Rd., Laurel, MS 39443.

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ROCKY POINT BAPTIST CHURCH, CARTHAGE, MS, IN LEAKE COUNTY IS CURRENTLY ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR FULL-TIME PASTOR. Please send resumes to Dan Grundy, 3136 Rocky Point Rd, Carthage, Ms, 39051

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RAYMOND ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH IN JACKSON IS CURRENTLY ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A PASTOR. Resumes can be sent to RRBBC, 4622 Raymond Road, Jackson MS 39212, ATTN: Pastor Search committee or e-mail resumes to rrbpastorsearch17@gmail.com.

LEMOYNE BLVD. BAPTIST CHURCH, LOCATED IN BILOXI, IS PRAYERFULLY SEEKING A MUSIC MINISTER with a passion to lead a traditional and contemporary service. We hope to find someone who enjoys directing an adult and children's choir, as well as leading a praise team. Please email resumes to secretary@lemoinebaptist.com.

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What About the Future? • Matthew 24:36-51

In 1970, Hal Lindsey wrote the book, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, which stirred up a whole generation concerning the second coming of Christ. It helped to birth The Jesus Movement, which spread its message. Christian songwriters wrote about it and Larry Norman's, *I Wish We'd All Been Ready*, became a chart buster. Preachers told about Jesus' love while also strongly emphasizing final judgment and hell. I was a high school student and believed Jesus was coming at any moment! There was an excitement and a strong wave of evangelism and revival, which spread throughout our nation. This was a great time to be an impressionable teenager as many leaders to my generation were boldly impassioned about Jesus and His return. However, Jesus didn't show up and sadly, by the 1980's the Jesus Movement waned and so did many evangelistic efforts. The movement was replaced by church's emphasis upon buildings, programs, and becoming "relevant" to the next generation.

Jesus' Mount Olivet discussion with His disciples (Matthew 24-25) was about His second coming—specifically the signs to look for. Many signs were listed but Jesus warned these were just "birth pangs" which would start slowly and increase in intensity and duration before that final day. "When

is that day?" the disciples asked. He continued, "But concerning that day or hour no one knows—neither the angels of heaven nor the Son—except the Father alone." (verse 36 CSB) He compared the days before His return as the days of Noah when the people were going about their lives ignoring the big boat being built in the middle of the desert. Just as Noah didn't know when the rain would start we don't know when Jesus will return but we must guard against losing the anticipation of it and we must stay alert. No matter how long the delay, we are not to become like the world going about business as usual.

While we are waiting, Jesus said the faithful servant would continue to do all that the Master had told him until He returned when he would be rewarded. But He gave a warning to the unfaithful servant that if they become like the world they would face the judgment and be thrown where there will be gnashing of teeth.



Explore the Bible

with Cyndi Grace

We see many of the signs Jesus mentioned all around but still no Jesus so what do we do? The important lesson of this scripture is not WHEN Jesus is coming but WHAT are we doing while we wait. Without Christ, people are going to spend eternity separated from God. Do we really care? Do we truly believe in hell? Do we truly believe time will run out for the lost to make a decision for Christ?

I had a conversation with my son recently. It had been a hard day so I sighed and told him I hoped Jesus would come back soon.

His answer startled me. He said, "Are you that selfish, Mom? What about all the people who have not heard about salvation, yet? What about them?" He was right. I was thinking only about what I wanted. I began to search within to see if I truly believed the lost would go to hell and did I even care? My son's words shook me from my lethargy and selfishness. I now have a renewed

commitment to share the good news of the gospel and to look at the lost around me as people who need a Savior not as evil people. The faithful servant would keep the Master's orders and I wanted to be that servant. Instead of seeking relevancy, we need to be serious about telling others about Him.

We can argue theology about the second coming until we are blue in the face but He IS coming back and when He does it will be too late for a lost world. Perhaps the lyrics to this Jesus Movement song, will rekindle your excitement to reach them.

*Life was filled with guns and war
And everyone got trampled on the floor
I wish we'd all been ready
Children died the day grew cold
A piece of bread could buy a bag of gold
I wish we'd all been ready
There's no time to change your mind
The Son has come and you've been left behind
The Father spoke, the demons dined
How could you have been so blind?
The Son has come and you've been left behind.*

Grace is a Bible teacher, conference leader, and member of First Church, Clinton.

Life in Christ • Luke 9:18-26

Often as we get older, inherently, there seems to be a growing desire to go back to our roots. Where did I grow up? Which house did I live in? Who are my relatives? From the proliferation of new ancestry entities and resources, obviously there is a craving among people today to trace their roots. One of the drivers to this, I believe, is identity. We want to know who we are and all these pieces of the past help answer our questions.

Today's lesson is all about identity in Christ. In fact, for the next six weeks we will focus on who we are in Christ and how our relationship with the Lord affects our church life, our home life, our work life, our community life, and our mission of life.

In Luke 9 verse 18 Jesus asked his disciples "Who do the crowds say that I am?" Jesus wasn't concerned here about public opinion. Look at his next question in verse 20. "Who do you say that I am?"

Jesus, to be sure, was not suffering from an identity crisis or experiencing amnesia. He had not forgotten who he was and what God had called him to do. On the contrary, he knew exactly who he was. Now he had to help his disciples understand who they were.

The way you answer the question, "Who is Jesus?" has more than theological implications for your life. Your entire identity and purpose for living pivots off this question or the answer you give. In other words, if Jesus is your Lord and Savior, your life will reflect that. You will understand that he is God's son who was sent to die for your sins. Thus you will realize how valuable you are and how much God loves you. Consequently you will want to live a life pleasing to one who has done so much for you. If you believe Jesus is the son of God and savior of the world, you will want to share him with others so they too can enjoy the sweet salvation that comes to those who put their faith and trust in Christ.

Sometimes we as believers suffer from an identity crisis. We begin to feel condemned because of our past, or worthless

because of a demeaning label or labels someone has slapped on us, or inferior because we haven't accomplished what others have. That's when we need to come back to our roots.

We should not attempt to find our identity in our feelings, from other folks, or even in our accomplishments or lack of. Who we are is eternally tied into who Jesus is. From Christ alone comes our identity. And out

of a personal relationship with the Lord and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, daily, we live out this identity until the Lord comes back for us.

Are you secure in your personal identity in Christ? If you are, it is the end of allowing the opinions of others to influence your behavior and feelings. And it is the beginning of being at perfect peace with the one who loves you so much that he died a torturous death on your behalf.

Bible Studies for Life

with Jim Burnett



But understanding who we are in Christ has other implications.

In Luke 9:21-22 Jesus surprised his disciples by telling them he was going to suffer many things, be rejected by the religious leaders, be killed, and then be raised back to life. This was not at all the Messiah they and the Jewish nation had expected. But then Jesus went a step further and revealed another head-scratching revelation: they too would die.

In verses 23 through 26, Jesus explains what it means to be a follower of him. It requires a life centered on doing God's will instead of our own. It means taking up the cause of Christ as our top priority. But hear this. When you know who you are in Christ, then you are able to, with confidence, accomplish what you are called to do in Christ.

So knowing our Christy roots is important. It not only tells us who we are but what our mission is. Listen to Jesus' promise to those rooted in him: "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." (Jn. 15:5 NIV).

Burnett is pastor of Willow Pointe Church, Hattiesburg.

FUNDING

cont. from p. 1

enabling the organization to continue to receive government funds.

Planned Parenthood does not perform abortions in Mississippi, but does maintain an office in Hattiesburg that refers women to out-of-state facilities that do provide abortions.

Mississippi has one remaining abortion clinic, located on North State Street in Jackson.

The president's enactment of the legislation is the latest in what is now a series of pro-life actions by his administration:

■ Trump signed an executive order Jan. 23 to reinstate the Mexico City Policy, which bans federal funds for organizations that perform or promote abortions overseas.

■ The U.S. State Department

announced April 3 it would not forward congressionally approved money to the U.N. Population Fund because of its partnership with a Chinese population-control program that includes forced abortions and sterilizations.

The new HHS rule does not explicitly block states from providing Title X funds to abortion providers. Instead, it bars states from basing the selection of a recipient organization

on anything other than "its ability to provide Title X services."

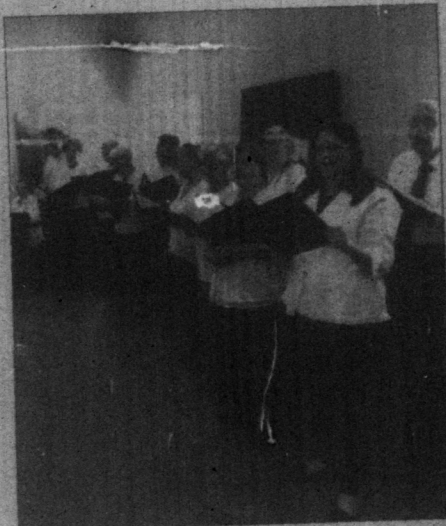
As a result, states are unable to block funds from going to organizations simply because they provide abortions. Title X is the federal program that provides money to states for family planning and preventive health services.

According to federal law, Title X funds cannot be used for the performance of abortions,

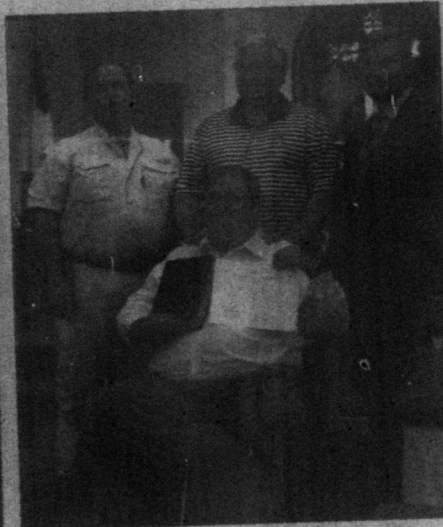
but pro-life advocates point out grants to Planned Parenthood and similar providers free up other funds for use in performing abortions.

Planned Parenthood affiliates performed 323,999 abortions during 2013-14, the most recent year for which statistics are available. PPFA and its affiliates received \$553.7 million in government grants and reimbursements, according to its 2014-2015 financial report.

Just for the Record



FIRST CHURCH, FLORA'S, senior choir, Joyful Noise, sang for the residents and staff of Compere Nursing Home, followed by lunch at Primo's in Ridgeland.



IMMANUEL CHURCH, CLEVELAND, ordained Clay McKee Sr. (seated) as deacon on April 2. Fellow deacons attending the ordination service were (from left) David Baker and David Gladden; and Pastor Steve Huber.



NEW HOPE CHURCH, FOXWORTH, dedicated their new fellowship hall April 2 and enjoyed a covered dish lunch in the new facility.

In other Church News:

► **Silver Creek Church, McComb**, will celebrate May Day on May 7. Services begin at 9:30 a.m., with music by The Singing Deacons. Worship service, 11 a.m. Jim Everett, guest speaker. Dinner on the grounds to follow.

► **Salem Church, Scott Association**, will host Southern Gospel trio Hyssong in concert, on April 23 at 6 p.m.

► **Lorena Church, Forest**, will be hosting its first annual Sparks Conference on April 22 beginning at 5:30 p.m. For more information, call (601) 906-3610.

► **Scott County Woman's Missionary Union** is hosting a Women of Hope Rally from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., June 24 at the Morton Activity Center in Morton. Activities will include exhibits to educate and inform about the local available services.



FIRST CHURCH, VICKSBURG, recently purchased a Send Relief cargo trailer from the Southern Baptist Convention's North American Mission Board. The church's disaster relief ministry will equip the trailer for the church's chainsaw team to minister to people impacted by disasters. Shown are (from left) Pastor Matt Buckles, Larry Daggett, Ashton Thompson, John Gee, Ken Pecanty, David Baldwin, Winky Freeman, and Glenn Rhett.

FIRST CHURCH, SUMNER, dedicated four babies to the glory of God on March 19 including (from left) Pastor Shane Hoes, Rachel, and Autumn; Ryan, Heather, and Cayson Kent; Sean, Kristen, and Kate Eliot Stubbs; Callie, Bryan, and Benson Roach.



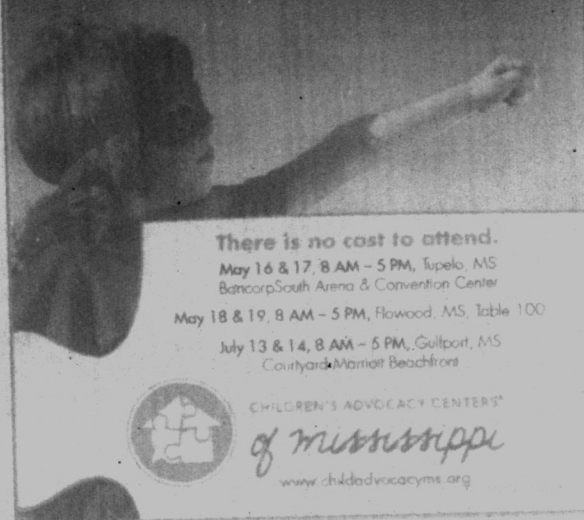
TOOMSBA CHURCH, LAUDERDALE ASSOCIATION, held their Kingdom Kids Celebration for those who have accepted Christ in the past few months. Participants included (from left) Elijah Collins; Kaitlyn Harrington; Lexi Harrington; Pastor Steven Wade; Hannah Hasty; and Isabella Collins.



Q. HOW DOES ABUSE AFFECT SPIRITUALITY?

A. Abuse wounds the spirit and leaves scars for life. Abuse and neglect can violate every part of a child—mind, soul, and body. The Chaplains for Children Training can provide the tools Churches need to model the love of Christ while listening and guiding children through the journey of coping and living more fully.

Plan to attend The Chaplains for Children Training to learn how to become part of the solution. Mississippi's children are counting on you.



There is no cost to attend.
 May 16 & 17, 8 AM - 5 PM, Tupelo, MS
 BancorpSouth Arena & Convention Center
 May 18 & 19, 8 AM - 5 PM, Flowood, MS, Table 100
 July 13 & 14, 8 AM - 5 PM, Gulfport, MS
 Courtyard/Marriott Beachfront

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